

**June 28, 2005**

**Press Release** | Contact: Danielle Langone (202) 225-6416

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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today responded to President Bush's prime-time speech on Iraq. Following are DeFazio's remarks: "I think the president missed an opportunity tonight to be straight with the American people. The president must provide a comprehensive and consistent strategy to bring the conflict in Iraq to a timely and successful conclusion.

"The president continued to cloud two issues: the war against terrorism and al Qaeda, and the war in Iraq. Let it be clear that we responded directly and forcefully to the September 11 attacks when we invaded Afghanistan in hunt of al Qaeda. But rather than finish that job by tracking down and capturing Osama bin Laden, the president chose to bring us into another conflict.

"No matter how you felt about the president's decision to go to war in Iraq, the question remains the same, how will he finish it? I don't believe that question was answered tonight.

"We are engaged in an open-ended, ill-defined conflict with no short term or long term strategy. The president has restated many times that we would stay in Iraq until the job is done and not a day later, but he has failed to explain what that means. What is success in Iraq? How will we know when the job is done?

"Contrary to the president's assertion, a set of goals or benchmarks are essential to defeating the insurgency and bringing our troops home sooner, rather than later. The American taxpayers who have committed nearly \$300 billion, the Iraqi people who must be given the chance to stand on their own to defend democracy in their nation, but most of all the troops and their families who have sacrificed loved-ones and who must endure multiple tours of duty deserve to know how the president plans to 'get the job done' and bring the troops home."